

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 EB-11 SS-14 INR-09 PRS-01 RSC-01 RSR-01

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R 144700 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2561
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 2101

STADIS//////////

FOR NEWSOM FROM VANCE

E. O. 11652 XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR US CG
SUBJ: TALK WITH MOBUTU ON GOZ REQUEST FOR COMMERCIAL AIRCRAFT
FINANCING

REF: STATE 043250

1. COHEN OF AF/C AND I CALLED ON MOBUTU MARCH 13
AT RESIDENCE OF ELEBE, HIS AMBASSADOR TO BELGIUM WHO
ALSO PRESENT.

2. I TOLD THE PRESIDENT I HAD ASKED TO SEE HIM IN
BRUSSELS, HAVING IN MIND THAT HE WAS NOT RETURNING TO
KINSHASA UNTIL APR 7, IN ORDER TO DISCUSS WITH HIM THE
CURRENT STATUS OF THE GOZ REQUEST FOR EXIM FINANCING
FOR COMMERCIAL AIRCRAFT. I ADDED THE MATTER HAD SOME
URGENCY AND I HAD ALSO WISHED TO MAKE SURE THAT THE
EARLIER MISUNDERSTANDING HAD BEEN CLARIFIED. I THEN
SUMMARIZED THE EXIM BANK LETTER OF FEB 23 ADDRESSED TO
COMMISSIONER OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT EKETEBI. GAVE HIM
A TRANSLATION OF THAT LETTER AND ALSO COPIES OF THE
RELATED EXIM BANK LETTERS OF PRELIMINARY COMMITMENT OF
DEC 27 FOR THREE 737 BOEING AIRCRAFT AND OF FEB 2 FOR
TWO MCDONNELL- DOUGLAS DC-10 AIRCRAFT. I POINTED OUT
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THAT BOTH THE LATTER LETTERS HAD BEEN WRITTEN BEFORE EKETEBI'S VISIT TO THE US AND ALSO THAT CONTACTS HAD ALREADY BEEN MADE WITH COMMERCIAL BANKS. I ADDED THAT THE GOZ DESIRE TO PURCHASE A 747 AND A TOTAL OF FIVE 737 AIRCRAFT HAD BEEN MENTIONED ONLY DURING EKETEBI'S VISIT AND AFTER REACTIONS IN BANKING CIRCLES HAD BEGUN TO CRYSTALLIZE. IN ANY CASE EXIM BANK WAS CURRENTLY OF THE VIEW THAT IT WISHED TO HELP FINANCE AT THIS TIME AIRCRAFT TOTALING THE VALUE OF THOSE MENTIONED IN THE TWO LETTERS IN THE PRELIMINARY COMMITMENT, IN ORDER WORDS ABOUT \$75 MILLION. THE TOTAL VALUE OF AIRCRAFT GOZ HAS NOW MENTIONED IS APPROXIMATELY \$110 MILLION. THERE WAS OF COURSE A VARIETY OF POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS AND I WISHED TO OBTAIN HIS VIEWS.

3. MOBUTU REPLIED THAT HE DID NOT UNDERSTAND WHY THERE WERE SO OFTEN PROBLEMS POSED BY THE USG IN OBTAINING OBJECTIVES WHICH HIS GOVT SOUGHT. THE CURRENT DEGREE OF PROGRESS IN THE ZAIRE WAS IN LARGE PART DUE TO AMERICAN SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE, AND HE WOULD HAVE THOUGHT

THAT WE WOULD BE PROUD OF IT AND READY TO ASSIST IN IMPLEMENTING PROJECTS THEY DEVISED. HE HAD HAD TO STRUGGLE TO ARRANGE THE INITIAL PURCHASE OF C-130 S, AS WELL AS THE CIVIL AVIATION ACCORD GIVING AIR ZAIRE THE RIGHT TO FLY TO NEW YORK AND OVER THE ACQUISITION OF THE COAST GUARD PATROL BOATS. I POINTED OUT THAT THESE HAD ALL BEEN ACHIEVED AND THERE WAS FREQUENTLY A PROBLEM OF MESSING THE POLICIES OF ONE GOVT AND THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OF ANOTHER. HE REPLIED THAT GIVING SOMEBODY SOMETHING GRACIOUSLY WAS BETTER THAN GIVING IT AFTER HAVING OVERCOME PROBLEMS. THE ZAIRE HAD GREAT CONFIDENCE IN THE US AND HE HOPED THAT THIS WAS NOT MISPLACED SO THAT THEY WOULD HAVE TO LOOK ELSEWHERE. HE THEN ALLUDED TO THEIR DECISION TO HAVE THE ZAIRE CURRENCY FOLLOW THE DOLLAR DURING TWO SUCCESSIVE DEVALUATIONS, AND MENTIONED THAT THE BELGIANS HAD COMMENTED ON THE UNFAVORABLE EFFECT THIS WOULD HAVE ON BELGIAN TRADE WITH THE ZAIRE. HE ADDED TH

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** STADIS

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts:
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 MAR 1973
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973KINSHA02101
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: RR
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: KINSHASA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730329/aaaahueu.tel
Line Count: 101
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Reference: 73 STATE 043250
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags: ANOMALY
Review Date: 29 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <29-Aug-2001 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <29-Oct-2001 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> wfs 971203
Subject: TALK WITH MOBUTU ON GOZ REQUEST FOR COMMERCIAL AIRCRAFT FINANCING
TAGS: PFOR, BE, CG, US
To: AF
BRUSSELS
SECSTATE WASHDC
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005